

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MOPS, MPOL, OCON, EG IS

SUBJECT: CAIRO INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON OCTOBER 73 WAR

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE OCTOBER WAR 1973 WAS HELD IN CAIRO 27-30 OCTOBER. GUESTS INCLUDED TWO HUNDRED FOREIGNERS WITH ABOUT THIRTY-FIVE AMERICANS, AS WELL AS FIVE HUNDRED EGYPTIANS. DELEGATES WERE REQUESTED TO PRESENT PAPERS FROM EITHER MILITARY, POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE OCTOBER WAR. DEP PM/MINWAR GAMASSY, CHIEF OF STAFF GEN FAHMY, COMMANDER OF THE NAVY ADMIRAL ZIKRY AND COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE, AIR VICE MARSHAL MAHMOUD SHAKER PRESENTED THE EGYPTIAN POSITION ON MILITARY SIDE; AND MFA MIN OF STATE, MUHAMMED RIAD RESPONDED TO POLITICAL QUESTIONS DURING ONE PERIOD. THE SPEECHES WERE MOSTLY BLAND WITH NOTHING NEW PRESENTED AND IT WAS DISAPPOINTING TO MANY OF THE DELEGATES THAT SENIOR GOE MILITARY OFFICERS WOULD NOT RESPOND TO QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR. DETAILS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE PUBLISHED AND WILL BE FORWARDED WHEN AVAILABLE. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE OCTOBER 73 WAS WAS HELD IN CAIRO FROM 27-30 OCTOBER, AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY. AFTER USUAL INAUGURAL SPEECHES, FIRST SESSION CONSISTED OF A REVIEW OF MILITARY STRATEGY OF OCTOBER WAR AND ITS IMPACT ON WORLD STRATEGIES BY DEP PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF WAR GENERAL ABDEL EL-GAMASSY, WHO EXTOLLED GREAT VICTORY OF OCTOBER 1973. NOTHING NEW THAT HAS NOT BEEN PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WAS MENTIONED. GENERAL GAMASSY POINTED OUT THAT PURPOSE ON TACTICAL LEVEL WAS TO TAKE LIMITED OBJECTIVES AND ON DIPLOMATIC FRONT TO BRING THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM OUT OF DEEP FREEZE AND INTO FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN, THUS FORCING FORWARD MOVEMENT OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

3. COLONEL (RET.) TREVOR DUPUY, USA, THEN SPOKE ON A MILITARY ANALYSIS OF THE OCT WAR IN WHICH HE PRESENTED PAPER GIVING DETAILS OF HIS PERCEPTION OF OCTOBER WAR, HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF INTERNAL HIGH LEVEL MILITARY DISAGREEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES, SUCH AS DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL SHAZLI AND FIELD MARSHAL ISMAIL ALY AND BETWEEN GENERAL SHARRON AND GENERAL DAYAN. DUPUY ALSO INDICATED THAT, WHILE IN ISRAEL FOR THE MILITARY SYMPOSIUM WHICH RECENTLY TOOK PLACE THERE, HE OBTAINED POSITIVE INFORMATION THAT THE ISRAELIS USED TOW MISSILES DURING THE OCT WAR IN SPITE OF FREQUENT DENIAL OF ISRAEL OF THEIR USE. GENERAL BUIS (FRANCE) SPOKE ON THE STRATEGY OF THE OCT WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES ON INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY EXAMINING ITS ASPECTS FROM BATTLEFIELD TO NEGOTIATING TABLE.

4. IN EVENING SESSION ON OCT 27, EACH OF CHIEFS OF THE SERVICES THEN SPOKE ON ROLES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SERVICES AND GAVE THE USUAL VICTORY BRIEFINGS ON THEIR SERVICE'S CONTRIBUTION.

5. OCTOBER 28 AND 29 SAW PROCESSION OF SPEAKERS PRESENTING PAPERS WITH AN ALOCATED TIME OF 10 MINUTES EACH, THEREBY ANNOYING MANY OF THE INVITED SPEAKERS WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE GOING TO BE ABLE TO PRESENT THEIR PAPERS FOLLOWED BY A Q&A PERIOD. HOWEVER, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT, GIVEN THE PERIOD OF TIME OF CONFERENCE, TOO MANY SPEAKERS WERE INVITED AND ACCEPTED INVITATION TO ATTEND AND PRESENT PAPERS.

6. DURING OCT 29 SESSION, WHILE PAPERS WERE BEING PRESENTED ON ECONOMIC SUBJECTS, A Q&A PERIOD ON POLITICAL QUESTIONS WAS HELD
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SEPARATELY BY MFA MIN OF STATE MOHAMED RIAD, WHO RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS FROM FLOOR AND STATED THAT EGYPT, GIVEN RIGHT CONDITIONS, IS READY TO SIGN A PEACE TREATY. RIAD INDICATED THAT PALESTINIANS ARE THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM AND MUST RECEIVE JUSTICE BEFORE A LASTING PEACE CAN BE OBTAINED.

7. ON FINAL DAY OF SYMPOSIUM EGYPTIAN MILITARY OFFICERS RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS THAT HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED IN WRITING. AGAIN

NOTHING NEW PRESENTED. QUESTIONS GENERALLY CENTERED AROUND WHETHER AMERICAN RESUPPLY WAS A MAJOR FACTOR IN ISRAELI COMMITTING THEIR FORCES TO WEST OF SUEZ CANAL. EGYPTIANS CLAIM THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT, WITHOUT U.S. SUPPORT, ISRAELIS NEVER WOULD HAVE BEEN CAPABLE OF ATTACKING. WHETHER OR NOT THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES WOULD BE CAPABLE OF ATTACKING ISRAEL IN THE NEXT TEN TO TWENTY YEARS BROUGHT RESPONSE FROM EGYPTIANS THAT THEY ARE IMPROVING THEIR ARMED FORCES AT A VERY FAST RATE, WHICH WAS DOUBTED BY MANY OF THE DELEGATES WHO BELIEVE THAT THE SWITCH FROM SOLE SOURCE MILITARY SUPPLIES TO MULTI SOURCE FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES WILL COMPLICATE THE LOGISTICS AND MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS CONSIDERABLY RATHER THAN ENHANCE THE ARMED FORCES CAPABILITY.

8. SYMPOSIUM WAS ATTENDED BY 700 DELEGATES, TPP FROM EGYPT AND 200 FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES. REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDED FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, WESTERN EUROPE, ROMANIA, YUGOSLAVIA, CANADA AND THE U.S. AMERICAN PRESENT AND TOTALED 35 AND INCLUDED MALCOLM KERR, ADM. PEET, HELPERN, PERRETTZ, PRANGER, FORMER ASSTSECDEF (ISA) NUTTER, RAFINAL, AMB. DEAN BROWN - MID EAST INSTITUTE, DAVID NES, SAUFER, GRIFFITH, TAYLOR, AND PIERRE SALINGER AS JOURNALIST, AS WELL AS COL DUPUY, HISTORICAL EVALUATION AND RESEARCH ORG. USSR, BULGARIA, FINLAND, MAURITANIA, SYRIA AND IRAQ DECLINED INVITATIONS TO THE SYMPOSIUM.

9. IN COMPARISON WITH SYMPOSIUM WHICH MET EARLIER THIS MONTH IN ISRAEL ACCORDING TO TWO DELEGATES WHO ATTENDED BOTH, THE EGYPTIAN SYMPOSIUM WAS NOT AS WELL ORGANIZED, PLANNED, OR AS OBJECTIVE AS WAS ISRAELI CONFERENCE. ALL TOO FREQUENTLY PRESENTATIONS WERE USED AS OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EGYPTIANS TO EXTOLL GREAT VIRTUES OF THE "ARAB VICTORY" RATHER THAN OBJECTIVELY STUDY AND ANALYZE THE OCTOBER WAR. RESULTS OF SYMPOSIUM WILL BE PUBLISHED IN BOOK FORM AND FORWARDED AS SOON AS IS AVAILABLE.

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